

The Attack Develops Along Five Fronts

"Stakes of the War"

Omits the Great Stake

EX-PRESIDENT TAFT, as every one knows, is extremely good-natured, and never was more so than when he wrote the first-aid-to-book-reviewers foreword to *Stakes of the War*, by Lothrop Stoddard and Glenn Frank. In fact we were tempted to quote it and let that suffice, but for the fact that the immortal phrase of Anatole France about book reviewing popped up into our memory, and we decided to permit our soul to have another adventure in this masterpiece. The adventure was disappointing.

What Stoddard and Frank have attempted to do in this work is to spread before the general reader the historical, political, racial, religious, cultural and economic facts about the twenty-four countries, colonies, and one city—Constantinople—that are included in what the authors mean by their title. Their viewpoint is that of the older diplomacy, as their language is rich in what Poe so wittily called its "cant."

To them the peace discussions of the future between the representatives of the Allies and the Central Powers mean a group of dignitaries arrayed in nothing less formal than morning coats assembled around a great table in a flamboyant salon parcelling out Belgium, Finland, the Ukraine and Constantinople among their respective Powers. Of the great moral idea behind this war, of the conflict of two types of Government, no trace exists in their pages. Historically their diplomacy advances no farther than that existing at the close of the Franco-Prussian War.

Granting that that aspect of the text is immaterial, we may examine it merely from the viewpoint of the facts presented. One of the striking eliminations they have made is the South Sea Islands, which Germany surely desires to regain—a claim to which Australia, Britain and Japan will voice decided objections. Again, any general reader who would take the slightest interest in a work of this character knows that the economic status and future of all the countries that are "stakes of the war" are of the highest importance in considerations of this kind. Yet beyond Belgium, Luxemburg and German Samoa no statistics of this kind are given, although they are readily available, since those quoted are not later than for 1913.

In addition to the above mentioned assembled elements there are listed the nations controlling the several countries, &c., before and during the war, the Powers immediately interested in them and the solutions of the problems created by the war that have been suggested. The tone of these may be indicated by the statement that the possession of Belgium by Germany "would render reasonably practical a German invasion of England by virtue of a solid German foothold on the English Channel."

Such a statement represents tradition, not thought. Germany has had such a foothold now for four years and has not dared attempt an invasion of Great Britain. The statement on page 362 that China leased Kiaochow to Germany in 1896, the year before the German squadron occupied that port as a punitive measure, is an obvious slip.

STAKES OF THE WAR. BY LOTHROP STODDARD AND GLENN FRANK. The Century Company. \$2.50.

Flying for Novices

THE literature of the heavier than air flying machine includes works of a historical, technical and war time experience nature, but so far as we know no volume has been published with the idea in view of telling an aspirant for a place in the Air Service, as they style it now in the army, just what an airplane is and how it works, and all the other things such an aspirant has to learn before he can become a pilot, an observer or an air fighter flying alone.

It is to fill such a gap in airplane literature that Flight Commander W. G. McMinnies of the British navy has written *Practical Flying*, a work for which Major-Gen. W. S. Brancker of the Royal Air

Forces has written a commendatory introduction in the course of which he speaks of "pilots to-day performing evolutions with the utmost confidence which eighteen months ago meant almost certain death."

The aviator-author of this text has performed his work well, for in the simplest, clearest language he tells his reader everything he needs to know. After discussing the type of man who makes a flier he describes the *Theory and Practice of Flight*; the *Elementary Principles of Airplane Engines and Causes of Engine Troubles*; the successive moves made in learning to fly; the use and working of the many instruments that are a part of the modern military airplane; and map reading. There is also an excellent glossary of terms commonly used in aviation.

Flight Lieut. E. L. Ford, R. N., has contributed many illustrations and diagrams that are models of clarity and of much use in making plain the technicalities of the machines and their progress through the air. Although the book is written solely from the viewpoint of British practice in flying, that does not mitigate in the least its very great value to the beginner in the art of aviation, to whom it can be heartily recommended.

PRACTICAL FLYING. BY FLIGHT COMMANDER W. G. MCMINNIES, R. N. George H. Doran Company. \$1.50.

The Orator's Plattsburg

A YEAR ago Montville Flowers, to whose sonorous name may be properly attached the sonorous title of president of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association of America, had an idea. It was to assemble in Washington many representative authorities on international politics, military affairs, labor, government and sociology; and when they had thus been gathered together to have them orate on the war, its causes, and the possibilities of its aftermath.

The meeting was called the National Conference of American Lecturers and took place April 8-13 last. A Washington editor said of the meeting: "The National Conference of American Lecturers came to Washington on Monday morning wholly unknown; by Tuesday morning Washington had discovered that it was a new governmental institution; not an institution of the Administration, not a political institution, but a governmental institution through which public opinion had found a national voice."

Now in spite of the title of the meeting all the speakers were not "lecturers," a word which usually connotes a speaker who is either a sentimentalist or a bore. Many of those who addressed the conference were men of quite another calibre. Andre Tardieu, French High Commissioner; Lord Reading, Herbert C. Hoover, the Belgian Minister, Benedict Crowell, Assistant Secretary of War; Father John A. Ryan of the Catholic University, and Gustavus Myers were some who spoke. Forty-five men and women were heard, and what they said has been printed in a volume of 368 pages entitled *What Every American Should Know About the War*, a title, by the way, that is not likely to attract attention to the book, more's the pity, since it is full of admirable and informative reading matter.

Much better is the description given of the text by the nameless author of the blurb on the cover folder, that "this volume is, in a sense, a training camp for the minds of all patriotic American men and women." It is nothing less, and is well worth reading by all Americans who like to do a little intellectual and patriotic training every day.

WHAT EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE WAR. EDITED BY MONTVILLE FLOWERS. George H. Doran Company. \$2.

A Naval History of the Seven Years' War

THERE have been few books devoted to war written in the last decade which have been reprinted since 1914 so well worth while as Sir Julian S. Corbett's *England in the Seven Years' War; A Study in Combined Strategy*. When originally published, in 1908 we believe, it made a profound impression in its naturally limited field, one of its greatest admirers being Admiral Mahan, who at

that period of his career was a captain and was lecturing at the Naval War College at Newport, R. I. He not only said to his navy officer pupils that it was "a work I commend heartily to you," but he cited the book as "an apt illustration of the interesting change in the direction of naval thought in the last thirty years." Mahan constantly quoted from it and said he "meant to." And if we had no other evidence of the value and high importance of this work the praise of the leading American authority on sea power and naval strategy is witness enough to its merits.

The text of this second edition is identical with that in the first. What Sir Julian proposed to do in his work was to show through the Seven Years' War (our concurrent French and Indian War) the importance of that element which he styles "the function of the fleet in war," which reaches higher and more widely than what is usually understood by naval strategy, and which, combined with the functions of the army and diplomacy, forms a part of a major strategy that overtops naval strategy proper. Corbett styles the war he has studied to throw light on this perfection of combined strategy "Pitt's War," owing to the fact that Pitt and his "system" was the real cause of England's victory.

The importance of Corbett's work lies in the fact that it impresses on its readers the writer's "appreciation of international conditions as an essential factor in all military plans," an element of naval strategy which not so long since was decried. And Capt. Mahan said in his lectures at the War College that the greatness of Pitt in respect to the conduct of the war lay in the fact that Pitt controlled the naval, military and the diplomatic factors, stressing in his talk the word "and."

If there are any students of naval history or strategy or international affairs who have missed this work we recommend it to them not alone for its technical aspect but for the grave charm of the author's incisive, forward moving style.

ENGLAND IN THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR. BY SIR JULIAN S. CORBETT. Longmans, Green & Co. \$7.

"Knitting and Sewing,"

Mrs. Nicoll's Book

THE sub-title of *Knitting and Sewing*, by Maud Churchill Nicoll (Mrs. De Lancey Nicoll), says explicitly that the book tells "how to make seventy useful articles for men in the army and navy." The reader, without instituting an actual count, will probably gain the impression that there are decidedly more than seventy. For the book gives directions, addresses and illustrations of materials and processes; it illustrates the different yarns with colored plates; it describes plain and fancy stitches for mufflers, waistcoats, ties; tells how to make helmets, caps, mufflers, gloves, sweaters, belts and ten kinds of socks!

Such specialties as mine sweepers' gloves and "doddies" are included, and there are directions for making chamois articles—waistcoats, body protectors, underwear.

Mrs. Nicoll was one of those Americans who never were neutral, least of all in thought. In December, 1914, she began a course in nursing; in April, 1915, she got her diploma; in July, 1915, she went to England to serve and had hardly begun there when she was run down by an automobile. Ever since she has lived in London, spending much time in bed and still, after three years of treatment, able to walk only the least bit with crutches.

And so she has knitted. And knitting she determined to help others to knit. She wrote this book at home in London, hard by the anti-aircraft battery in Hyde Park, during the period of the Zeppelin and Gotha raids, some twenty-five in number. She escaped unhurt.

All this Mr. Nicoll tells in his short preface, and he adds a most unusual fact: All profits from the sale of the book, accruing to the publisher, the George H. Doran Company, as well as to the author, are to go to the American Red Cross.

The book, being written in England, specifies English yarns, but a publisher's note gives American equivalents and there will be no difficulty in obtaining suitable materials here.

KNITTING AND SEWING. BY MAUD CHURCHILL NICOLL. George H. Doran Company. \$1.75.

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